Younger, low-income city singles and families

Who They Are

The most economically challenged of all segments, Just Getting By is home to younger, low-income singles and single-parent families located in large cities like London, St. Catharines, Windsor and Halifax. In their dense neighbourhoods, nearly 45 percent of maintainers are under 45 years old. More than half are single, divorced or separated, and over a third are lone-parent families, typically with younger children. Residents tend to be third-plus-generation Canadians with low education levels and low-level jobs in sales, the services, trades and manufacturing. Most households can only afford to rent units in older low-rise apartment buildings or own inexpensive single-detached houses. But being young and mobile has its advantages: more than half moved in the past five years with the hope of climbing the socioeconomic ladder. Surveys show a desire to improve their prospects in the popularity of online courses and management training programs. Without deep pockets, they engage in low-cost activities like going to parks, city gardens and auto shows. In this segment, budget-conscious residents score high for the value Importance of Price.

The young singles and families in Just Getting By pursue a youthful lifestyle on a budget. Their wide-ranging leisure activities include billiards and bowling, motorcycling and going to nightclubs. Nearly everyone in this segment shops at discount grocery, clothing and department stores; Walmart is a particular favourite. While dinner at a fancy restaurant may be a stretch, residents frequently patronize popular chains like Taco Bell, Burger King and Swiss Chalet. For a little excitement, they’ll go to a casino, video arcade or horse race. At home, these on-the-go young people make a relatively light media audience. Their highest-rated TV shows include teen dramas, music videos and extreme sports, and their radios are tuned to stations that play dance, hip hop and classic rock music. While they rarely pick up a daily newspaper, they enjoy reading entertainment and celebrity magazines. Having cut their landlines years ago, they’re increasingly turning to their mobile phones as their preferred media device. Overall they’re still a mixed new media market, going online for selective activities, such as playing games, shopping and dating.

How They Think

In their downscale neighbourhoods, the members of Just Getting By seek to live more spiritually, contemplating the meaning of existence (Spiritual Quest) and rejecting the notion that only modern science can unravel life’s mysteries (Interest in the Unexplained). Rather than being guided by reason and logic, they often make decisions based on feelings and emotions (Intuition & Impulse), and many are willing to take risks in order to get what they want in life (Penchant for Risk). They believe that getting involved in the political process is necessary to correct social inequalities (Rejection of Inequality). Not surprisingly, they have significant Financial Concern Regarding the Future, but they also feel threatened by life’s uncertainties, intimidated by technological change and sense that they’re at the mercy of forces beyond their control (Technological Anxiety, Fatalism). As a result, some express a Need for Escape from their routine and the confines of society’s traditional moral code (Rejection of Orderliness). In the marketplace, Just Getting By consumers choose price over status in their purchase decisions and believe small businesses are more committed to ethical practices than large companies (Importance of Price, Confidence in Small Business).
Where They Live

How They Live

LEISURE
- billiards
- nightclubs/bars
- craft shows
- parks/city gardens

SHOPPING
- discount grocery stores
- craft supply stores
- Shoppers Drug Mart
- second-hand stores

TRADITIONAL MEDIA
- TV teen dramas
- TV mixed martial arts
- classic rock radio
- entertainment/celebrity magazines

INTERNET
- beauty/fashion sites
- music streaming on computer
- online dating
- Amazon Prime Video

FOOD/DRINK
- processed cheese
- value-priced domestic beer
- grocery store take-out
- buffet restaurants

FINANCIAL
- e-payment for purchases
- changed financial institution in last year
- >$10,000 in savings
- use tax preparation services

AUTOMOTIVE
- domestic intermediate cars
- one car
- under $15,000 spent on vehicle
- 2000-2009 model years

SOCIAL
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Snapchat
- dating apps

MOBILE
- video apps
- play games on phone
- research products on phone
- discount coupons on tablet

HEALTH
- Take back pain relievers 6+ times/month

ATTITUDES
- “I am interested in everything that science cannot explain”
- “I have enough trouble taking care of myself without worrying about the needs of the poor”
- “Technology intimidates me”
- “Brands are not important when I go shopping”